116, 285

"Backhouse mentions that one day he watched 'a woman making the oval bags of open work, used in fishing, etc., of the leaves of a sedgy plant, which she split with great dexterity, and [155] after having divided them into strips of proper width, softened by drawing through the fire' (p. 103). La Billardière speaks of clumsy baskets made of a reed called Juncus acutus (I. ch. v. p. 211), while Rossel (I. ch. iv. p. 56) found some 'baskets, woven with strips of the bark of trees, very straight and slender, and twisted nevertheless with some skill, fastened like a bag with a string of the same material. Another little kind of bag, made of a dried Alga marina and very hard, seemed designed to draw water with, and to serve as a cup.' Regarding the manufacture of these bags, Backhouse (p. 102) says they either open an oblong piece, so as to form a flat bag, or run a string through holes in the margin of a circular piece so as to form a round one. Mortimer (p. 20) evidently refers to these bags when he speaks of certain 'small buckets for holding of water, made of a tough kind of sea-weed, and skewered together at the sides.' In the Museum at Hobart are some baskets made from the strap-shaped leaves of certain Cyperaceous plants common on the sand-hills by the sea-shore. Bunce (p. 30) says baskets were made of the leaves of the Anthericum semibarbata as well as of the Dianella. Bass gives the following curious description of a basket: 'The single utensil that was observed lying near their huts was a kind of basket made of long wiry grass, that grows along the shores of the river. The two ends of a large bunch of this grass are tied to the two ends of a smaller bunch; the large one is then spread out to form the

basket, while the smaller answers the purpose of a handle. Their apparent use is to bring shell-fish from the mudbanks where they are to be collected' (Collins, pp. 168-169)."